

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL BARCELONA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4118
AMEMBASSY MADRID

C O N F I D E N T I A L BARCELONA 0384

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ELAB, SP
SUBJ: LABOR: CNT SUPPORTS DEMOCRACY

1. A LOCAL CNT (CONFEDERACION NACIONAL DEL TRABAJO) MEMBER, AGUSTIN OSET NACHES, RECENTLY VISITED THE CONSULAGE TO DISCUSS SEVERAL ISSUES. HE STATED THAT HE HAD BEEN AUTHORIZED TO DO SO BY ENRIQUE MARCOS, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE CNT.

2. OSET SAID THAT IT WAS ESSENTIAL FOR THE CNT TO REMAIN A LEGAL, LEGITIMATE TRADE UNION. DESPITE THE FACT THAT CNT MEMBERS HAVE BEEN ACCUSED OF THE BURNING OF LA SCALA (A POPULAR BARCELONA NIGHT CLUB) AND OF BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR MUCH OF THE LABOR VIOLENCE RECENTLY, THE CNT WAS COMMITTED TO PEACEFUL LABOR ORGANIZING. ALTHOUGH ANARCHISTS, THEY WERE LABOR ANARCHISTS, NOT POLITICAL, AND NEEDED A VIABLE, DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IN ORDER TO PROSPER. THE CNT WAS AS CONCERNED AS EVERYONE OVER THE ITALIAN SITUATION AND DID NOT WANT SPAIN TO FOLLOW THE SAME PATH. AS LONG AS IT REMAINED LEGAL, THE CNT COULD PROVIDE A NON-COMMUNIST ALTERNATIVE TO LEFTIST WORKERS, SOMETHING LACKING IN ITALY AND A MAJOR
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CAUSE OF ITS PROBLEMS, ACCORDING TO OSET. THIS MESSAGE - THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CNT REMAINING A LEGAL UNION IN A DEMOCRATIC COUNTRY - WAS ONE WHICH OSET AND MARCOS WANTED TO BE SURE THE USG UNDERSTOOD.

3. THE REASON FOR OSET'S MESSAGE, ASSUMING IT WAS IN FACT AUTHORIZED BY THE CNT SECRETARY GENERAL, MAY

WELL BE A GROWING FEELING OF INSECURITY ON THE PART
OF THE CNT. ALREADY ONLY A SHADOW OF ITS FORMER,
PRE-CIVIL WAR SELF, ITS BOYCOTTING OF THE UNION
ELECTIONS WAS IN THE OPINION OF MOST OBSERVERS A
MISTAKE. THE CONNECTION OF SOME OF ITS MEMBERS WITH
RECENT VIOLENCE HAS ALSO RESULTED IN NEGATIVE
PUBLICITY. TO COUNTERACT THIS, CNT POSTERS HAVE
BEEN APPEARING BLAMING VIOLENT ACTS SUCH AS LA SCALA
ON "GOVERNMENT AGITATORS". THE CNT ANNOUNCED THAT
IT WOULD NOT PARTICIPATE WITH OTHER UNIONS IN THEIR
MAY DAY DEMONSTRATION SO THAT THEY WOULD NOT BE BLAMED
FOR ANY VIOLENCE. THEIR SEPARATE DEMONSTRATIONS
IN BARCELONA WERE INCIDENT FREE. THIS VISIT, THEN,
MAY BE PART OF A CNT ATTEMPT AT IMAGE BUILDING.SINN

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